

# National Congress Bulletin

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS  
1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.



MARCH, 1939

## CHOOSING THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

**A**LL of us who are engaged in parent-teacher work are confronted by the necessity for making choices. Today, you, as leaders, must decide to what outside agencies and forces the interests and endeavors of your parent-teacher membership are to be opened up. On another day, you may be called on to decide the method of approaching some parent-teacher task—whether by long and patient waiting for the right moment to proceed, or by a courageous and immediate attack upon your problem.

Often we find the tests for our decisions all too few, but three fundamental guides remain always: The conviction that the membership will be deprived of something of worth and value if we fail to accept the undertaking . . . The belief that the undertaking will offer opportunity for growth and development to all those who participate in it . . . The eager sense of anticipation and the joyful hope that is ours as we contemplate what this undertaking may mean for our parent-teacher work.

If our parent-teacher undertaking can be measured by these three tests and not be found wanting, then our decision is made—we can go forward.

President,  
National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

*Frances S. Pettergill*

## NATIONAL CONVENTION

Cincinnati, Ohio . . . April 30 to May 4, 1939

THEME: *Freedom for Growth*

**T**HE National Congress of Parents and Teachers will meet in Cincinnati, Ohio, for its annual convention, which will be held April 30 through May 4, with headquarters at the Netherland Plaza Hotel. Delegates from every section of the country will represent the parent-teacher membership of more than two and one-quarter million.

"Freedom for Growth" is to be the convention theme, the second presentation in the development of the three-year theme, "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."

The convention theme will be developed through addresses by specialists and through discussions by guest discussants and national chairmen of standing committees. Beginning Monday, May 1, there will be a day by day presentation of the following general phases of the theme: Self-Realization, Human Relationships, Economic Effectiveness, and Civic Responsibility. These topics are discussed in the recent publication of the Educational

Policies Commission, *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy*.

The plan for each day of the convention is as follows:

A general session will be held at 9:00 A.M., which will close with an address on the topic of the day. At 2:30 P.M. there will be a general session devoted to discussion of the same topic under the direction of the speaker of the morning. Participating in the discussion will be chairmen of national standing committees and invited discussants. General sessions will be held each evening at which an outstanding speaker will be heard, except on Wednesday evening when the major social feature, a reception, will be held to provide opportunity for all delegates to meet national officers.

At 11:00 A.M. conferences will be conducted by national chairmen of standing committees. At 4:15 P.M. each day, various social and recreational features are being planned for delegates.

## Tune In and Find Out

WINGS FOR THE MARTINS  
NBC Blue Network

Wednesday, 9:30-10:00 P.M., E.S.T.  
Presented by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the U. S. Office of Education, and the National Broadcasting Company.

March 1

### LEARNING TO READ

Barbara can't say her "A, B, C's" and she doesn't know all the "sounds," but she spends more time reading than anyone else in the family. Do children learn to read more readily by reading for a purpose?

March 8

### THE CHILD IN A GROWN-UP HOUSE

How would you like to live in a house where the hook for your hat was ten feet high . . . the lavatory five feet from the floor? The chairs so big that you had to pull and push yourself into them? That is the way your house seems to the five-year-old.

March 15

### WHAT'S THE SCHOOL BOARD FOR?

If you haven't a modern school, would you like to have one? Do you know how to get it? Do you know who hires your teachers? Who selects the equipment? Who says how teachers shall teach? How children shall study?

March 22

### NO PLACE TO PLAY!

Suppose your children want to play games after school. Where can they play? Are you too old to bowl, pitch horseshoes, or play baseball? If you wanted to play, where could you?

March 29

### SCHOOLHOUSES THAT WORK

Has your schoolhouse movable desks? Adjustable seats? Work rooms? Gymnasium? Low windows, low shelves, low hooks, and low easels for the little ones? Is it possible to have a modern school even in an old-fashioned schoolhouse?





# Signposts and Guides

## INTERPRETING THE GUIDING

## PRINCIPLES OF PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

"A CONGRESS parent-teacher association conforms to the fundamental policies stated in the National Bylaws which maintain . . . the noncommercial character of the organization . . ."—FROM THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES.

THE "noncommercial" policy, as stated in the bylaws of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, has been interpreted to mean that Congress units or Congress members in their parent-teacher capacity make neither contacts nor connections that benefit or promote the interests or products of any commercial concern.

THE local parent-teacher association sometimes finds it necessary to plan for a money-raising project to finance or to assist in financing the year's activities. The committee in charge of this project may work with the program committee in planning one large money-raising entertainment of educational and social value; or may decide upon a simple parent-teacher sale or service; or may be called upon to consider a cooperative project or activity.

MANY such cooperative activities or projects are offered ostensibly in the interest of the welfare of children and youth, but upon investigation they may prove to be clever advertising schemes to secure implied, if not actual, endorsement and promotion from the parent-teacher association. Experience has shown that it is better to forego such projects than to become involved with commercial activities.

### Noncommercial guideposts for Congress associations include:

1. No lists of parent-teacher members should be given, loaned, or sold for any purpose whatsoever.
2. No endorsement or sponsorship of a commercial product or enterprise should be given by any Congress unit, its officers, or its members in their parent-teacher capacity.
3. No advertising of a commercial enterprise should be given at parent-teacher meetings. Even the announcement of the value, or the use of a commercial product inevitably carries with it an endorsement.

4. No gift or material should be accepted by a Congress parent-teacher association, by its officers, or by its members in their parent-teacher capacity if it carries any commercial identification or implication; gives actual or indirect endorsement to an individual, a firm or product; or places the officer or association under some obligation.

5. No materials of commercial organizations should be distributed or promoted by Congress units. Education departments are established by some commercial concerns for the purpose of rendering service in special fields some of which fall within parent-teacher interest. While these education departments may have no immediate connection with the sales, publicity, or promotion departments of the concern, they necessarily function under the trade name of the company and are a part of the company. Their ultimate objective is profit for the concern. Through the distribution of such materials, the P.T.A. becomes an advertising agent for the concern or for its products.

### About Publications

#### How do you rate on this publications test?

**Question:** What does the Program committee receive in place of the Manual reprints supplied to the chairmen of other committees?

**Answer:** An extra Manual is provided for the use of the Program committee as a part of the local unit package.

**Question:** What lists of Congress materials for the use of parent-teacher associations are available?

**Answer:** The Publications Announcement and the Local Unit Package plateprint list both free and pay materials. The folder, Index to Congress Publications, classifies specific references.

**Question:** What publications contain suggested outlines for building programs?

**Answer:** Five pamphlets contain suggested outlines . . .

1. *Programs*—three outlines for an eight-month program with suggested emphases, activities, and projects to be carried on by the different age-level groups.
2. *The Highschool Association*—three outlines adapted to highschool interests.
3. *Young Lives in a Modern World*—a year's public welfare program for highschool and junior highschool parent-teacher association programs.
4. *The Rural P.T.A.*—three outlines on widely different themes, each of interest to a rural community.
5. *Home Play in Rural Areas*—a year's recreation program.

All these pamphlets may be ordered from the state office.

CONGRESS associations should carefully consider all aspects of each proffered transaction, contact, or connection. If questions are raised concerning the commercial aspects of any activity, the following are points to consider:

- a. Does the acceptance of the project prevent members from feeling free to express themselves on certain subjects?
- b. Does it place the officer or the association in a position of giving actual or implied endorsement of a firm or a product?
- c. Does it place the association, its officers, or its members under obligation to continue promotion of an article or a firm?

A noncommercial policy is essential as a protection for a parent-teacher organization. The integrity of our purposes can be safeguarded only as we avoid commercial entanglements by conformity to these definitely stated policies.

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"I have come often into contact with the National Congress through speaking for local groups, and have realized increasingly that there could not be a more logical combination of educational forces than that of teachers and parents. The building upon this sound foundation, however, has been made possible by the conspicuous wisdom and initiative shown in the development of the organization."

—MARY E. WOOLLEY, President  
Emeritus, Mount Holyoke College



# Parent-Teacher News



## MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES REPORTED BY LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

### *Nutrition Project*

A NUTRITION project for the benefit of underweight children was sponsored by one rural association, with emphasis on the importance of milk in the children's diet. As a result of the increased drinking of milk the health of the children was improved.

It was then decided to furnish a hot dish at lunch time to all children who desired it, especially those who came to school on buses. Since there was no equipment for preparing or serving food in the school, the lunch was prepared in the home of one of the members and served cafeteria style at the school, each child furnishing his own dish and spoon.

### *Children's Radio Programs*

A SERIES of children's radio programs is being sponsored by one association in cooperation with the public library. The stories presented are selected for their literary value to children in grades three to six. Storytellers are members of the public library staff. There is great interest in the programs on the part of children, as well as adults who are interested in higher standards for children's literature and radio programs.

### *Crippled Children*

CRIPPLED CHILDREN are given special help by an association in a public school established for children who are physically crippled, who have heart trouble, infantile paralysis, and other physical handicaps. A small fund has been placed at the disposal of the principal to purchase supplies and to care for individual needs immediately, without red tape or delay, as occasion arises.

## National Congress Bulletin

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Editorial Committee: Mrs. Charles D. Center, Mrs. Fred M. Raymond, Mrs. M. D. Wilkin-son.

Subscription price: 20 cents a year.

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An effort is made to provide vocational or professional training for such children as are qualified for this type of work. An important feature of this project will be follow-up work to see that the young people are properly placed in positions where they can do their best work.

### *Story Hour for Children*

A STORY hour for children who accompany their mothers to P.T.A. and study group meetings is being sponsored by one association. Attendance at the meetings has increased since this arrangement has been made to take care of the children. An increasing number of members have appeared at each meeting and as the news is circulated it is anticipated that more mothers will take advantage of the study group opportunity. At the same time, the children are receiving an essential part of their education in the storytelling hour.

## About Publications

A WELL-INFORMED parent-teacher leader knows where to find help on such problems as:

1. How to find the right books to satisfy the eager demands and intellectual curiosity of a growing family. *Children's Reading*. (Price, 10c.)
2. How to select foods which are important in building strong teeth. *Healthy Children*, p. 22. (Cover edition, price, 10c.)
3. What methods to use in conducting a study group where there is no trained leadership. *Parent Education Guidebook*, p. 15. (Cover edition, price, 10c.)
4. Where material can be found to develop the programs outlined in the program pamphlet. *Changing Patterns for Group Living*. (Price, 25c.)
5. Where to find suggestions for using publications, building programs, carrying on general parent-teacher work, using good methods of publicity, and adapting all programs and procedures to the needs and interests of the open country. *Parent-Teacher Methods*. (Price, 10c.)

### *Parent-Teacher Alcove*

A PARENT-TEACHER alcove has been established at the public library in one city through the cooperative effort of the library and the parent-teacher association. Books on storytelling, material on children's books, and parent education study material, as well as current magazines of interest to parents and teachers, are easily available in the alcove. The development of this part of the library as a center of special interest for those interested in child welfare and education is planned.

### *Public Relations*

A PROJECT in public relations is being promoted by one unit. Complete modernization of the school system is contemplated by the board of education, and the P.T.A. is cooperating to arouse citizen interest in the program. Among the school problems discussed at P.T.A. meetings are part-time school, adequate school facilities, and how to interest non-English speaking parents in the P.T.A.

### *Community Center*

A COMMUNITY center is sponsored by one unit in cooperation with other civic and community clubs. Community suppers, bands, and choruses of fathers, mothers, daughters, and sons are among the activities. Members of the group take part in dramatic productions, pottery-making, weaving, painting, knitting, sewing, and book reviewing. Dances for the young people of the community are held every Friday night.

### *Highschool Activities*

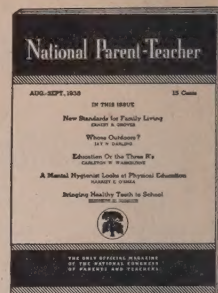
ONE HIGHSCHOOL association has attempted to familiarize parents with all aspects of modern school work. Extracurricular activities of the school were presented in a series of discussions on athletics, assemblies, the glee club, dramatic clubs, and the school newspaper. The possibilities of the highschool band, details of school procedure, the marking system, and home study were also studied. A program was devoted to the school library and its possibilities in training students in the use of a library and in the enjoyment of reading for recreation. A physical examination of all highschool students engaged in athletics was made by the board of health at the request of the association.



# Our National Magazine

## PREVIEW OF THE MARCH ISSUE

WHO is there that would deny that family, friends, neighbors, and acquaintances are essential to the best possible life? It is indeed difficult to conceive of a world in which human relationships do not play a predominant role. The March issue of our Magazine is dedicated in a particular way to those who are interested in human beings, who feel a need for them; in other words, the March issue, in its own intimate way, is a tribute to parent-teacher people who are devoting their energies to making this world a better place for all human beings.



● "A great psychiatrist once said the greatest tragedy of his medical experience was to see how much people wanted to love each other and yet could not seem to do it." This thought is found in Dr. Folsom's discussion of "Education for Human Relationships," the third article in our series based on the Educational Policies Commission book, *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy*. Dr. Folsom speaks about the art of human relationships, what it is based upon, what it requires, and the opportunities of both home and school in aiding the individual to develop insight into his own feelings and those of others.

● In writing the article "Projects and Purposes" from the point of view of the role of the parent-teacher association in a democracy, Anna H. Hayes renders a real service. First vicepresident of the P.T.A., she does not allow herself to indulge in any praise of what the organization has done with its rare opportunities, but challenges every parent and teacher to accept *more active responsibility*, beginning in their own communities, to provide for the interests and well-being of children and youth. What are *your* community's projects and purposes? Do *you* approve of them? What service do *you* render as a citizen of a democracy?

### Special Feature

#### "THESE ARE OUR CHILDREN"

One of the most significant factors in human relationships today is the changing function of the family. "These Are Our Children" is a symposium of what eight young people, highschool students, believe to be the most essential contribution which family life should make to youth today. They speak frankly and fearlessly!

● What the Browns, the Smiths, and the Joneses think and do is of vital importance to the sixteen-year-old. In fact, if he can't keep up with them his life is hardly worth living at all. Yes, "Rating with the Group" is a serious problem for the adolescent, as every parent or teacher of adolescents knows. Gertrude Chittenden makes an interesting plea for the adolescent by pointing out how this period of growth can be made a pleasant one for both child and adult.

● "I think the best thing that can happen to a man or a woman in search of friends and neighbors is to enter the world as one of a large family of children." So says Robert P. Tristram Coffin in his article, "Friends and Neighbors." He thanks his lucky stars for being born one of ten children. And even though there were times that he sympathized very warmly with Joseph's ten older brothers when they got him alone, it is with rare human understanding that Dr. Coffin writes of family life and its all important influence in shaping one's attitudes toward others.

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Other articles and features: "The Family: Democracy in Miniature" by Katharine Whiteside Taylor, author of the new book with the arresting title, *Do Adolescents Need Parents?*; "I Join the P.T.A." by Alice Hopson Nisbet; and "Health in the Teens" by Kathleen Wilkinson Wootten, outstanding leader in health education; book reviews of *Song of Years*, "Teem"—*A Treasure Hunter*, and *Life and Growth*; the editorial; the President's Message; and "The Noncommercial Policy of the P.T.A." by Ola H. Mailhes, the seventh article of our series on the Guiding Principles for parent-teacher associations.

## WILL YOU DO IT?

YOU can make the *National Parent-Teacher* one of the greatest powers for good in your neighborhood by increasing its circulation.

YOU can speak about it so enthusiastically that others will be eager to subscribe.

YOU can help your Magazine chairman, or Publications chairman, or both, to find ways and means to bring it to the attention of members.

YOU can do a dozen and one things, important things, to create widespread community interest in it.

## Will You Do It?

BY DOING SO . . .

YOU will render a service to children and youth. The *National Parent-Teacher* is published specifically to promote their welfare and education. It vitalizes and intensifies individual study, group study and discussion. It stimulates participation in community activities affecting the child's physical, mental, and social well-being.

YOU will have the satisfaction of making a lasting contribution to parent-teacher work by promoting the official national magazine of the organization of which you are president and leader.

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MUCH CAN BE DONE for the children and youth of your community by interesting their parents and teachers in the *National Parent-Teacher*. Its wise counsel and guidance will give them an understanding of problems which are common to all homes and schools. Do the members of your P.T.A. know about it? Have they seen a copy of it recently? Do you subscribe and thereby set a good example for others to follow? We are counting on you to help us to extend the service which the Magazine is rendering to children and youth!

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A sample copy will be sent post paid to any address upon receipt of 10c.

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Washington, D. C.